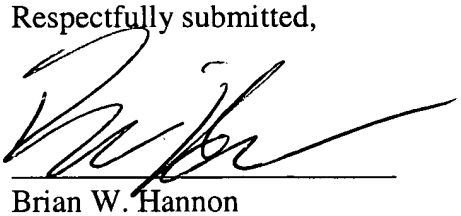
REMARKS

Claims 3-7 and 10 have been amended to remove the multiple dependency. Entry and consideration of this Amendment are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



Brian W. Hannon
Registration No. 32,778

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
2100 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20037-3213
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

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APPENDIX

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

The claims are amended as follows:

3. (Amended) A process according to claim 1~~ or 2~~, characterized in that after the hydrolysis, but before being combined with the water-soluble ferric salt, the dextran is purified by one or more membrane separations having a cut-off value suitable for holding back dextran molecules above 2,700 Da, possibly followed by further hydrolysis and one or more membrane separations having a cut-off value between 340 and 800 Da removing the smaller molecules.

4. (Amended) A process according to ~~any of claims 1-3~~claim 1, characterized in that the dextran molecules have a reducing sugar content not above 4% b.w. after the oxidation.

5. (Amended) A process according to ~~any of claims 1-4~~claim 1, characterized in that the hydrogenation is performed by means of sodium borohydride in aqueous solution.

6. (Amended) A process according to ~~any of claims 1-5~~claim 1, characterzied in that the oxidation is performed by means of a hypochlorite, preferably sodium hypochlorite in basic aqueous solution.

7. (Amended) A process according to ~~any of the preceding claims~~claim 1, characterized in the following steps:

preparing an aqueous solution comprising the hydrogenated and oxidized dextran and at least one water-soluble ferric salt;

adjusting the pH of said aqueous solution to a value above 10 by addition of a base;

heating the mixture to a temperature above 100°C until it turns into a black or dark brown collodial solution and is filterable through a 0.45 μm filter;

purification and stabilization of the solution using filtration, heating and membrane separations and addition of one or more stabilizers, and

optionally drying the solution to obtain the desired iron-dextran compound as a stable powder.

10. (Amended) Iron-dextran compound produced according to ~~claims 1-8~~claim 1, characterized in that its apparent peak molecular weight (Mp) is 50.000-150.000 Da, preferable 70.000-130.000, more preferable 80.000-120.000 Da and its iron content is 15-45% b.w.